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MEMOIR

OF

MARGERY JACKSON,

THE CARLISLE MISER & MISANTHROPE.

"'Tis infamy to die, and not be missed."

SECOND EDITION.

PRINTED BY JAMES STEEL, JOURNAL OFFICE, 3, ENGLISH STREET.
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MARGERY JACKSON:

the Carlisle Misanthropist and Miser?

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PREFACE.

After many years absence from her native place (Carlisle), and finding on her return that the peculiarities of the late Miss Jackson still afforded a subject for conversation, and excited interest; and learning that no account of her, in a detached form, had ever appeared before the public, the writer is induced to present this sketch of, perhaps, the most remarkable character that ever resided in Carlisle.

It may be asked in this age of benevolence, "what benefit can accrue from an exhibition of singularities which are by no means worthy of imitation?"

If lessons of morality may be learned from inanimate creation; if we can

> "Find tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
> "Sermons in stones, and good in every thing."

much more may certainly be educed from the intelligent part thereof, even when we fail to find anything meet for example: hence we have brought before us in scripture the character of a Nable, a Mezabel, and a Ahab.

It is more than probable that the subject of this Memoir had not enjoyed early training; selfish feelings had been permitted to take deep root in her breast, which in time would tend to extirpate every better disposition; we can fancy her even in childhood unlovely and unloved, getting and grasping every thing within her reach, but imparting nothing.

Parents cannot too early correct the natural bias to selfishness, peevishness, &c., in the minds of their children; nor too strenuously implant right principles; even in earliest childhood should they be taught to love their species, and to perform acts of benevolence: soon as the dawnings of reason are discovered, "Then fix the generous purpose in the glowing breast," and every principle that is consonant with the revealed will of God; then, if spared, shall they grow up useful, holy, and happy, blessing and blessed!

Many imagine that the first years of life may be trifled away,—that after-instruction will repair the neglect,—thus the character is formed before the parents are aware that the child has any character at all.

Listen to the words of an eminent divine:—"When infancy and childhood are vilely cast away, the morning is lost, the seed time neglected, and what is the consequence? a life full of confusion, and an old age full of regret, a day of unnecessary toil, a night of vexation, a hurried summer, a meagre autumn, and a comfortless winter."

As for misanthropy, that spirit of the evil one—may it soon cease from among the children of men: for as the light shineth, the darkness will flee away; and when the meaning of the word is

asked, it may be said: "A misanthrope is a being who likes nobody, whom nobody likes, and who is like nobody,"—and such was MARGERY JACKSON.

FRANCES BLAIR, (LATE JOLLIE.)

Penrith, January, 1847.

*** To a legal gentleman in Carlisle I am indebted for most of the facts connected with MARGERY JACKSON's history; and take this opportunity of thanking him for the kindness with which they were furnished.

F. B.

MEMOIR

OF

MARGERY JACKSON.

During the lifetime of this singular woman, various surmises were entertained, and much said respecting her early life. It has been asserted that she had been a servant in London till her brother's decease, when she came to Carlisle to claim the property which he had willed to a distant relative; and that she took lodgings in Stanwix till she determined what she would do. It was said, and generally believed, that when she carried her suit to Chancery, she performed the journey to London as a pedestrian, and when there pleaded her own cause; but in the Court of Chancery, as the business is conducted, her public interference would be dispensed with.

The following particulars, however, may be fully relied upon as perfectly authentic, and present to the public much that has hitherto been confined to the knowledge of a very few individuals.

Margery Jackson was baptised at Saint Mary's Church, in Carlisle, on the 22nd February, 1722.

She was the only daughter of Joseph Jackson, of Carlisle, merchant, by Isabella, daughter of William Nicolson, a cousin of Bishop Nicolson.

Her grandfather was Thomas Jackson, of Carlisle, commonly called "Trooper Tom"—he having been a trooper in Cromwell's army during the civil wars.

Farther back the pedigree of the Jacksons is not traceable. That of the Nicolsons not much farther. The name, however, was a good one; and it seems to have been the pride of the Jacksons; the more so since a Nicolson had wedded an Aglionby; and an Aglionby had wedded a Nugent of Ireland; whence sprung Barry Yelverton, Chief Baron of the Irish Exchequer, afterwards Lord Avonmere. Thus the eccentric descendant of Trooper Thomas Jackson nourished in her bosom proud notions of kindred and alliance with the ancient family of Aglionby, the celebrated Bishop Nicolson, and the Nugents and Yelvertons.

The following sketch of pedigree of the descend-

ants of Trooper Tom will be found useful in reading the subsequent pages:—

THO. JACKSON, "Trooper Tom," married MARY JOHNSTON, 1671, and died 1700.
1
JOS. JACKSON, married ISABELLA NICOLSON, in 1710, and died 1732.
WM. NICOLSON JACKSON, died 1776, without issue.
JOSEPH JACKSON, died 1746, without issue.
JEROME JACKSON, died 1751, without issue.
MARGERY JACKSON, died 1812.
2
MARY JACKSON, married JNO. JAMES, 1705.
THO. JAMES, married FRANCES RICHARDSON, 1728.
MARY JAMES, married Ald. WM. HODGSON, 1752.
THOMAS HODGSON, died 1788.
3
BARBARA JACKSON, married —— SMITH.
JNO. SMITH, married MARY ARMSTRONG, 1720.
JOS. SMITH, married ISABELLA HAMILTON.
JOHN SMITH, married —— SPEAR.
THOMAS HAMILTON SMITH.

Margery's grandfather, Trooper Tom Jackson, appears to have been possessed of property. The field lying behind George Street eastwards to the race-course was his. In the Court Roll of the Soccage of Carlisle Castle, his name occurs as a freeholder; and his widow and son appear as tenants of Collier Close, alias "Trooper Tom Close."

He died in the year 1700, leaving his widow and three children, viz., Joseph, Mary, and Barbara. He made no will; therefore his son Joseph inherited his real property. In 1710, Joseph married Isabella Nicolson, daughter of Mr. William Nicolson, a cousin of Bishop Nicolson; Mary married John James, of Carlisle, merchant; Barbara married one Smith, a shoemaker.

Joseph Jackson throve in the world; he died in 1732, possessed of considerable estates and personal property, leaving his widow and four children, viz., William Nicolson Jackson (at that time of age), and Joseph Jackson, Jerome Jackson, and Margery Jackson,—the three last-named being then all under age.

By his will, Joseph Jackson gave all his estates to his eldest son and heir, William Nicolson Jackson; to each of his sons, Joseph and Jerome, and his daughter, Margery, the legacy of £1,000, to carry interest during their minority; and to his widow all the residue of his personal property.

The widow did not long survive; she died in 1733, and by her will left to each of her three sons a

legacy of £550, and to Margery £200,—giving the residue of her property, real and personal, to her eldest son, William Nicholson Jackson, whom she appointed executor.

The three youngest children were thus left entirely to the care of the eldest son.

Joseph, the second son, seems to have had a commission in the army, and died in 1746, unmarried, at the age of 25.

Jerome was sent to Oxford, and died, unmarried, in 1751, aged 23.

Margery seems to have been brought up and educated by her cousin, Thomas James, or his sister, Elizabeth James. Of her education little can be now learnt. In some fragments of old accounts there are payments to "*the dancing master*" for her; and for "*powder and pins*," "*hoop pettycoate*," "*Dormees and double ruffles*," "*a pair of scarlet stockings*," "*a fan and ribbin*," &c., &c., from which it may be inferred that her bringing up was much the same as that of other young females at that time; and that the eccentricities which marked her after-life might be attributed to untoward circumstances acting upon a naturally crabbed and selfish mind.

William Nicholson Jackson married a Miss Johnson, but had no children. He was a clergyman, and several times Mayor of Carlisle. He lived in the house now occupied by the Carlisle and Cumberland Bank-

ing Company, in the Market Place; and was a man of first-rate standing in Carlisle.

Between Margery and her brother there was never much cordiality of feeling. She charged him with having monopolised the fortunes of their deceased brothers, Joseph and Jerome, of which she claimed to have an equal share; and, after much private squabbling, she filed a Bill in Chancery against him to compel him to account for the personal property of her parents, and to pay the legacies given by their wills. It does not appear that these had ever been properly administered, so that she had grounds of claim.

Whilst this Chancery suit was pending, William Nicholson Jackson made his will, and died in 1776. By his will he left to Margery merely an annuity for her life payable out of his large property; in the event of her having children (an event not in the least degree probable, as she was then aged 54, and as unlike becoming an exception to the general law of nature as it was possible to imagine any one) he gave the property to them,—and in case of her having no child, he devised the whole to Thomas Hodgson, who was (as it may be observed in the pedigree) his cousin thrice removed, being the descendant of his aunt Mary Jackson, daughter of Trooper Tom.

He merely left some trifling legacies to the Smiths, who stood in equal degree of relationship. They were poor and needy enough; but the family pride of the

Jackson's had always kept at arm's length the descendants of Barbara, who had demeaned herself by wedding with a shoemaker.

Nothing could exceed the rage of Margery when she found herself cut off with an annuity, but she was not the woman to sit down with it quietly. She was nearly destitute; yet her proud resolute spirit never faltered for one moment. She found a friend in Joseph Bowman, of Botcherby, a Quaker. She would employ none of the attorneys in Carlisle, all of whom she cordially hated. She placed her case in the hands of Mr. Robert Mounsey, of Castle Street, Holborn, London, the brother and London agent of Mr. Mounsey, of Carlisle, and she went up to Town to look after it herself. Her solicitor had no sinecure in her retainer. For year after year she sat over him, a morose, hard-featured, flinty-hearted creature; no ways resembling a woman in anything but dress—and in that like none other, with one sole pursuit—the prosecution of her claims—one sole amusement in watching the progress of her case in Court, before the Master, and in her solicitor's office.

The nature of her claim was shortly this:—By her father's will she herself and her brothers Joseph and Jerome had each a legacy of £1,000. By her mother's will Joseph and Jerome had legacies of £550 each, and she £200. These legacies she alleged were never paid by William Nicholson Jackson; and consequently that they remained due; and with an enormous arrear of interest formed a charge upon the

estates. Her own legacies and interest in full, and one-half of those of her brothers Joseph and Jerome, she claimed for herself, and the enforcement of these claims involved the unravelment of all the family accounts and affairs since the death of her father in 1732.

She revived and prosecuted her suit against Mr. Thomas Hodgson (or "*Squire Tommy*," as the good people of Carlisle designated him, according to the ancient and laudable custom of nicknaming,) the devisee under her brother's will; and they worried each other in Chancery till his death in 1788. He died a young man and unmarried; and by his will left all his property to be sold and divided amongst his cousins of the same name. These, 15 in number, looking at the apparently interminable litigation with a person of Margery's character, very prudently sought a compromise with her. Accordingly, in 1791, they accepted £100 each, she agreed to pay the costs of the suit also; and released to her the whole of the real property of her brother the Revd. William Nicholson Jackson. There is, perhaps, hardly another instance to be found of the unflinching determination and constancy with which this contest was prosecuted on the part of Margery. She seems to have made her mind up to worry the Hodgsons in Chancery until they dropped the property—and contrary to all justice and equity she succeeded in her design.

In 1791, after obtaining a conveyance of the estates, Margery returned to Carlisle in her carriage

(which had been her brother's) and took possession of the family mansion, where she resided till 1809.

There is little doubt but that her miserly habits at first arose out of a determination to devote every sixpence she could scrape up to the prosecution of her Chancery suit, and afterwards out of her anxiety to clear off the heavy charges she had incurred in the suit, and the £1,500 she paid to the Hodgsons on the compromise.

"If riches increase," we are told not to set our hearts upon them; but poor rich Margery's subsequent conduct proved that the apostolic injunction was lost upon her: hence misery was in her ways.

Throughout life she cherished her predilections in favour of law decisions, and whenever she considered her rights infringed upon she spared no pains, nor even expense, in prosecuting her cause: she was, in every respect, a litigious woman.

Along with her carriage (which had once been handsome) Margery became possessed of two fine bay horses, but she never used them after her first entrance into Carlisle, on her accession to fortune. Time alone was permitted to wear their beauty down. If the old lady had any affection for living creatures it was expended upon her darling bays; and her frequent exclamations of fondness, and her exclusive liberality towards them, proved that she had. Her large and solitary habitation appeared as if deserted, many of

the windows being closed with inside shutters, and very dirty. She had them once cleansed, and the event being so wonderful it was recorded in the *Carlisle Journal.*

For a few years Margery kept both a man and a woman servant, and Cumberland's own Bard, in a ballad called "Daft Watty," introduces the character of a country lad, supposed to have been her last male servant, who, on meeting a friend at the fair, recites the following :—

"An auld bearded hussie suin caw'd me her man,
And frae that day, I may say't, aw my sorrows began.
* * * * *
Neist my deame she e'en starv'd me, that niver liv'd weel;
Her hard words and luiks wou'd hae freeten'd the deil;

She hed a lang beard, for aw't warl leyke a billy goat, wi' a kil-dried frosty feace : and then the smawest leg o' mutton in aw Carel market sarrad the cat, me, and hur for a week. Tho bairns meade see gam on us, and thunder'd at the rapper, as if to waken a corp.

And these were Margery's generous days, for ultimately, finding her inmates greater plagues than necessary appendages to her domicile, they were one after another dispensed with, and for many years previous to her exit, neither man, maid, dog, nor cat relieved the dull monotony of her drear abode.

Indeed, her temper and habits were such that she seldom could keep her servants longer than a week at a time, and it is believed that at last she could not get one.

Her house was elegantly furnished, but in an ancientstyle; the windows being(as before stated) most of them closed, hid from her view much of the dust and dirt which had accumulated in many years, but which became visible to others when her eyes were closed in death. She lived, and had her fire in her front parour, but the kitchen was stowed up with ashes.

Being left alone, Miss Jackson served herself in the best manner she was able: one of her tenants waited upon her horses, and another made her bread at her own house, and probably washed her clothes.

When she had a regular servant it was said that she never permitted her to enter her sleeping room, not even to clean it, and that one day, by mistake, the old lady left the door unlocked, and being perceived by the girl, curiosity led her to peep into it, and knowing that her mistress had gone amongst her tenantry, ventured to walk in and examine the hitherto mysterious apartment, but was soon interrupted by the sound of Margery's steps; being obliged in her retreat to come in contact with her mistress, who vociferated "Well, madam, and where have you been? in my room?" The terrified girl replied in the negative. Of course, all was made secure, and Margery resumed her walk.

Her dog (when she had one) tended her daily ambulations, and when so fortunate as to find a bone or any other eatable that would appease the longings of a hungry stomach, Margery would stand beside him, and keep off all intruders with her cane.

Miss Jackson was of the middle stature, thin, sallow, and shrivelled, with a most forbidding aspect; in her countenance might be traced "earth-born care," envy, malice, and hatred; no wonder that she carried to the grave the name of her earliest years, and we may safely conjecture that "no love-lorn sigh" was ever breathed for her, nor voice e'er said, "O were that maiden mine."

For milliners and dress-makers she had no sympathy; they would have been a useless race had all been like her.

In the very heat of summer she was sometimes seen dressed in an old washed-out yellow gown, which she always held up so as to exhibit a yellow white petticoat; she would then also wear a blackish silk cloak, something of the scarf shape, which might have been Margery's finest adornings for thirty or forty years, but her favourite and general dress was an old gray duffle coat,—none of your mandarins, full and short, with hanging sleeves,—but tight every way, and only so short as to save the bottom from wearing away against the stones, and expose to view her gold buckles, the same, we may suppose, as graced the under members of her great-grandmother centuries ago! This said grey doublet was confined at the old maiden's waist with a hemp-cord, and had a hood, which was drawn up under a brownish-black bonnet of indescribable shape; she generally used pattens, and carried in her hand a gold-headed cane.

Margery never attended divine worship. She was once known to go to St. Cuthbert's Church, where she had a front seat, to turn out of it some young men, who, she had been informed, took the liberty of stepping over the door (it being constantly locked); and having accomplished her purpose, immediately walked away home, either to read her large folio Bible or use her needle, for she had been seen at both these employments on the sacred day.

To children Margery had a strong aversion. When applied to for rooms, as many of her houses in Carlisle were let off in single apartments, at the rate of five and six pounds a year, she used to say, "How many toads have you?" meaning children; and invariably rejected as tenants such as had large or increasing families.

When such an event occurred as the introduction of an infant among her tenantry, soon as it became known to her, she visited the family, to lecture on the impropriety of adding to the superabundant population.

When her tenants perceived her approach, the children would hide themselves, and the mothers lock their doors. As love incites to love, and dislike procures dislike, so to teaze and vex old Margery, as they used to term her, was a favourite recreation to the merry boys of Carlisle. "Let us have a bit of fun with old Margery," was always responded to with glee. They would try to snatch her cane; anon they

would twitch her gown or coat; then shout and run away; but never did they hurt her person. As for mental feelings, it never entered their heads..that she had any. But the boys' chief sport with her was, on a winter's evening, to tie a string to her rapper, throw it over the lamp post, then away over the street with it and up the old Town-hall stairs, at the top of which they would pull the string and rap, tap, tap, till the old lady opened the door, stick in hand: the string was instantly slackened, and the poor provoked old woman would bounce-too the door: immediately the rap, tap, tap would recommence: again would she pop out her head, being determined this time to scald some of her tormentors with boiling water; but again was her vengeance eluded.

On one occasion a young lad, an apprentice in the neighbourhood, whose curiosity was greater than his prudence, mounted a stool to take a peep at Miss Jackson in her parlour, being at the time in conference with her solicitor, who, on perceiving the boy, slipped slyly out, and caught him in the act; he soon got a nearer view than he wished or expected. The stool was forfeited, but the lad was liberated on promising good behaviour in future: a crowd collected on the occasion. At one time, Margery having no doubt made a calculation on the expense of employing a workman to re-set her grate, which, for want of that operation, had consumed an unusual quantity of fuel, concluded that the most economical plan would be to have it done at once, provided she could make a good bargain with a workman. No sooner determined upon, then away she sped to

a most likely man; but before commencing the work the charge must be fixed. After objecting to his demands, and telling him the utmost he must expect for the job, the fellow professed to accede to her wishes, and promised, as soon as possible, to go to her house. Being provoked with her niggardliness, he prepared to practice a deception upon the poor old woman; he procured a number of large, well-formed peats, which he besmeared with brick-dust, and with these he built up a neat fire-place; but judge of the consternation of the old lady when, on lighting her fire, all the beautiful construction disappeared.

With all her meanness in money matters, she was as proud as Lucifer. As she walked the street in her grey duffle habit, more like a beggar than a lady of property, she might be heard to exclaim in her harsh, supercilious tone, as she perceived any person well to do in the world, "*Trash! Trash! upstarts! tradesmen's wives, with their pockets stuffed with money, raising prices in the markets! Trash!*"

The Revd. Samuel Bateman, who married one of the co-heiresses of the Aglionby family, and resided at Newbiggen, near Carlisle, sometimes sent her game—but there was no possibility of conciliating her. One day she flung the birds in the face of the man who delivered them, swearing that they were not so good as he used to bring, and she would have none of his trash.

It is believed that Margery allowed herself necessary support, notwithstanding her parsimony,—

she had reasoning powers, and would no doubt argue with herself till she concluded that unless she took care of her body it would sink as a natural consequence, in which case she could not take care of her money, and if she vanished from it, that would be quite as bad as if it vanished from her.

It is not good to be alone continually—solitude and an uneasy conscience might lead to the bad practice which she at length took to of drinking. Her drink was brandy qualified by a slight mixture of Port wine. She sat with a bottle of each on the table; these she called *Dr. Port* and *Dr. French.* She always paid for her liquor, and would have no bill in the wine merchant's books.

Margery frequently foreboded the ruin of the country from the increasing extension of manufactories! How far she was correct in forming these surmises subsequent experience has proved. She seemed to have a pleasure in anticipating evil: many of her laconic and sarcastic remarks intimated as much.

She hated taxation, as far as it contributed to the pomps and vanities of royalty and state (so called by her); could she have given her share of the requisite for the support of war only,—a just and necessary war (deemed so by her), and never was more money spent in any lifetime than in her's, on this national evil,—then these oozings from her vitals would have been tolerated.

There was, no doubt, something in war congenial with her spirit, for her life was a continued contest.

On one occasion, when those victims of war, the remains of the 42d Regiment of Foot, passed through Carlisle, after their return from Egypt, she aided a subscription for them of two guineas!

She probably thought, "These are the guardians of my country,—if that be invaded by an enemy, what will become of my precious treasure?"

In 1805, when Nelson's great victory was obtained, and the whole nation concurred in demonstrations of joy by a general illumination and fireworks, Margery retired to the house of her friend, Mr. Bowman, of Botcherby, choosing to expose her opaque mansion to the attack of a public-spirited rabble, whose missile weapons soon demolished every pane but one, and, by throwing burning wood through the windows, endangered the safety of the premises. The interference of the authorities prevented any serious calamity.

In political opinion Miss Jackson was a tory, and on the eve of a contested election, when the party distinctions of blue and yellow prevailed, she would participate rather warmly in the ebullitions of party spirit, and has been known fearlessly to encounter the fury of a mob by decorating her windows with yellow, and appearing in a gown of the same colour,—blue being the popular one.

Her attorney and two other consulting friends were the few who were admitted to private audience,

and the only beings with whom she held anything like communion. She did not believe in the " communion of saints." It was necessity, imperatve necessity, that our heroine should have counsel: her scattered property required more than a woman's head and hands to manage, or it is probable that the men would never have been permitted to enter her house. They were men of business: they helped to bring the gold into her treasury, and so were endured.

It has been observed of our misanthropist, that, "scorning to mix with the common herd of mankind, (whom she depicted as a mass of villany,) and equally averse to accommodate herself to the politer part of her species, by those courtly phrases which are generally adopted to smooth and facilitate the intercourse of social life, she habituated herself to that sort of language, which, in some respects, was eculiarly her own, but savouring much of what has been denominated ' Billinsgate rhetoric,' in which she was in no inconsiderable degree eloquent." The refinements of social life, with its many endearments, were viewed by Margery as the gew-gaws of children, and the essence of folly. She believed not that " kindness gives the flower of fleeting life its lustre and perfume, and that without it we are weeds."

On what are termed the pleasures of the world, we question that she ever bestowed a single thought, —not that her mind soared above those fleeting vanities ; but gold !—the love of gold was the ruling passion of her heart !

Miss Jackson would always have her rents paid in gold or silver, at the open casement of her parlour window. Bank notes she abhorred, considering them as so many circulating evils. She would have none of them.

Her house was her bank: other banks might break, or villains might break into them; but under her own clutches her gold was safe,* and she could feast her eyes with the sight of it.

It was confidently stated that, when she died, her iron chest contained nine thousand guineas, which her executor and legatee, Mr. Bowman, handed over to his banker, David Carrick, who sold them in London to great advantage,—gold being at that time at a high premium.

When the growing infirmities of this cheerless woman rendered it unsafe for her to live alone, she was removed to the house of her old friend, at Botcherby, in a common cart, amongst straw, where she continued nearly three years, as a family disturber; and it is believed that her turbulent temper hastened the decease of the amiable mistress of the house, Miss Bowman; and on the day of her funeral she said "I'm going to be mistress now."

At length her career was arrested. At Christmas, 1811, she became unwell,—her voice became hollow—she could not take her brandy—took milk

* It was a received opinion that she constantly kept loaded pistols by her; hence no attempt to break into her house was ever known.

and slops — was not again carried to her bed; but remained in her chair. In the latter end of January, she was seized by paralysis,—her head sunk on her chest—she became powerless. She expired on the 6th February, 1812, aged 90.

She had been possessed of and left property and money to the amount of about fifty thousand pounds, which, if rightly appropriated, would have tended to gladden the hearts of thousands.

Attracted by curiosity, hundreds of persons attended her remains to St. Mary's Churchyard, where she was interred,

"Unwept, unhonoured, and unsung."

Except that the probationary existence of an immortal being was over, a being for ever removed from the land of hope, there were at that funeral no reasons for sorrow, nor any expressions of regret. No chord of love had been broken—no bond of friendship had been loosened—no place in society had been vacated —no loss to mankind had been sustained;—she never cheered the orphan's heart, nor made the widow sing.

After her death, Joseph Bowman succeeded to the property, by virtue of the following extraordinary will. He was no relation to her; but undoubtedly she had a greater regard for him than for any other person. Her extreme age and repulsive habits of life had caused it to be scarcely known who was her heir-at-law; and no person made the slightest question of the validity of a document which, on the face of it, appears very questionable:—

In the name of God amen

I Margery Jackson Spr of the City of Carlisle now in yr parish of Stanwix being in perfect health & of sound mind Memery and understanding do declair this to be my last will and Testement—I give & bequeath unto Jane Jackson widow of Nathaniel Jackson of Carlisle fiveten pounds a year during her natureal life which is yr interest of three hundred pounds which said sum of three hundred pounds I order and direct to be paid to Willm Jackson her son at her deaceas as a legacy from me. I give & bequeath to Robert Bowam of Botcherbe yr sum of one hundred pounds. I give & bequeath to Mary Bowam of Botcherbe yr sum of three hundred pounds. I give & bequeath to Mary Yelverton of yr Cty of Doubling yr Capatil of Irland three hundred pounds & all my wearing apparal as laces gounds and all oruiments I am or may be possed of except my gold watch which I do give to my Executor hereinafter named who shall pay to Elez Clark of Wigton Doughter of Wilfered Clark of Standing Stone during her natureal life yr sum of ten pounds a year. I give & bequeath to Se Bright of Winser Milliner if she be living yr sum of two hundred pounds as a gratuity for her kindness to me when I boarded with her at Stafford. I give and bequeath to Soffia Jackson Durovery Daughter of Peter Durovery of Great Sr Hellons Bushapgate Street London yr sum of Two hundred pounds as being my only God daughter & to Robert Mounsey of Castle yard Holburn London my attorney two hundred pounds as a return for his carring on my Law Suit so well as he has done which I desire he will procente yr suit with the same Vigour as in my lifetime it was by me carred on & that it may be so till it is ended. I do direct that yr Interest of my present fortune that I am in possion of be applyed to yr carring on said suit if it be needfull to carrie on yr same & at yr ending of this suit I direct and it is my Mind and will that yr above Legaceys herein by me bequeathed be by my executor justly and duly paid to all my legatees directly within three months after yr ending of this suit fairly by yr course of yr law & no compromising of it for if my Executor should offer to compromise it my will is that he havo nothing that belongs me either real or personal but it shall go to yr next I have left it to as if he had been dead and that next shall act instead of him & if he doe not

act as I have directed then to y^{e} next in this my will named as my Her for him to act as I have directed & I do give and devese all y^{e} Reasedue of my personal Estate and all other my Estates real or personal under whatsoever Tenner or where so ever situated wheather Freehold Copyhold or Tennent Right Customery or whatsoever Tenner so ever or whear so ever situated I give to Jos Bowman of Botcherbe who I constitut & appoint my sole Heir & Executor & to his Maill heirs forever Provided his son or sons take upon him y^{e} name of Nicklson, if his first son does not then to y^{e} next and so on to y^{e} last of them & if y^{e} said Jos Bowman chouse to take y^{e} name of Nicklson upon him, he shall enjoy my fortune for his life but if not I order and direct he has only five hundred pounds out of it & be Trustee for the Remainder for the son that takes y^{e} said name of Nicklson upon him, in Falour of so doing my mind & will is that my whole Fortune after y^{e} payment of y^{e} above Legacees go to Mary Yelvertons sons first seckond third & so on to all of them they allways take y^{e} Name of Nicklson upon them whoever is to injoy this my Fortune which Principle in Pearsonal Estate & any real Estate I may be possed of at y^{e} time of my death they shall have no power to dispose of only have y^{e} In come for their Lives that so the next Heir bee not deprived of his Right and y^{e} sons of y^{e} said Yelvertons shall injoy it so long as his Maill heirs take y^{e} name of Nicklson upon him in defolt of this then my mind & will is that my whole Fortune & Eastates real & personal go to the seckent son of Crestifer Eglinbe of Nunery if he shall have such son and to take y^{e} name of Nicklson upon him and so on to all his sons in like manner as above to him and his heirs for ever they still keeping y^{e} name of Nicklson This I do declair to be my last will and Testement by me signed & seeled in y^{e} presance of those.

this 6 day of August

Witnesses 1783

George Graham

John Graham Margery Jackson (Seal)

James Grayson

a I have directed then to go to y^e^ next to act after y^e^ above Legecies are paid I do constitute & apoint Jos. Bowman of Botcherbe my sole Executer to whom I give all my reall & personal Estates under whatsoever Tenner or wher so ever situated wheather Freehold Customery, Copyhold or whatever other Tenner I give to y^e^ said Jos. Bow *to have & to hold to the said Joseph Bowman his Heirs and Signes for ever Witness my hand this 4th Day of February* 1812

Signed sealed and Delivered in the presence of us } *Margery Jackson her mark* (Seal)

John Westgarth
Thomas Milburn
George Reay

This document is wholly of her own writing except the part printed in italics and the witnesses names, and, apparently, with that exception, all written by her at the same time, viz., in August, 1783, when the original will bears date.

It is obvious that, when Margery was writing her will, she finished the first page, and then, turning over the leaf, continued her writing on the third page, instead of the second, for a time; but that either from her perceiving the mistake, or from her disliking the wording of what she had written, or some other cause, she suddenly left off in the middle of Bowman's name, (for it will be observed that her writing on the third page ends with the syllable *Bow),* and commenced afresh on the second page, on which she concluded and executed her will of the 6th of August, 1783, yet, leaving the words she had written on the third page standing isolated and incomplete, so that her will, commencing on the first page, might be read in continuation both upon the second page and upon the third page—it being, when read from the first to the second page, a complete will; but, when read from the first to the third page, an incomplete and unfinished, document.

The son of Mary Yelverton became Viscount Avonmore. He had no ground to interfere, because by the will he could only be entitled after Joseph Bowman's death without male heirs. The heir-at-law of Margery could not to all appearance, interfere, because the will made in 1783 bore every mark of

validity. The consequence was, that Joseph Bowman enjoyed the whole property during his life, and died in 1831, leaving a will by which he disposed of it absolutely.

Upon his death, Lord Avonmore caused the matter to be investigated, believing that the third page of the will, dated the 4th of February, 1812, was invalid: that under the will on the second page, in 1783, Bowman had the property for life only, and that after his death it devolved upon him, Lord Avonmore, as the son of Mary Yelverton.

It was found, on examination of witnesses, that ten days before her death Margery had a paralytic stroke—that she evidently was dying—that there was a stir about her will—saddling of horses—riding to Carlisle to see attorneys—whispers about the house that her will "*was to be signed, and that it was an old thing she had made herself many years before, but it wanted signing*," &c., &c. On the 4th February, the day but one before her last, three witnesses were called in,—simple country men. Their account of the transaction was singularly contradictory—one of them, moreover, declaring that he never saw Margery sign the will at all—that he was not admitted into the room where she was—but found the paper lying on a table in the adjoining parlour when he went, and was asked to sign it, and did so,—imagining no harm, and knowing no better!

All was ripe for a law-suit; and the recovery of the estates by Lord Avonmore, under the original will

of 1783, was looked for by his legal advisers as a matter of as much certainty as the glorious uncertainty of the law admits of. When, lo and behold! it occurred to some of them that in 1783 Margery had no estates to devise to any body—that she did not acquire the property for some years afterwards, when the compromise took place, in 1791, between her and the Hodgson's; and consequently, that as regarded those estates the will of 1783 was altogether inoperative!

So that Lord Avonmore had no farther concern with the matter.

The potent words (printed in italics) added to the fragmental third page of Margery's will on the 4th February, 1812, carried the whole property to Joseph Bowman, "*his heirs and signes*,"—unconditionally.

It is true the alleged defective execution of it remained open for proof; but who was there to take advantage of it? The heir-at-law of Margery was the only person that could do so; but where was he to be found? Had the descendant of Smith, the despised shoemaker, made his appearance to claim the estates, the romance would have been complete. As it turned out, strangers succeeded in the enjoyment of the rich inheritance which Margery's pride in vain had destined to the line of the Yelvertons and Aglionbys, and the perpetuation of the name of Nicolson.

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